2005 AmeriCorps

EDUCATION AWARDS PROGRAM REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

APPLICATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 4, 2005

CALIFORNIA SERVICE CORPS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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The AmeriCorps Pledge

I will get things done for America – to make our people safer, smarter and healthier.
I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.
Faced with apathy, I will take action.
Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.
Faced with adversity, I will persevere.
I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.
I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NATIONAL SERVICE OVERVIEW

NATIONAL SERVICE BACKGROUND

From American philosopher William James' original vision of non-military national service in the early twentieth century, national service has grown to address the needs of our communities and represent the ideals of our country. When faced with challenges such as illiteracy, poverty, crime, and environmental problems, our nation has always relied on the dedication and action of individuals to identify solutions to our pressing problems. National service has provided opportunities for community members to make sustained commitments to service that have benefited individuals and communities alike. Through these intensive commitments, individuals build upon long-standing American traditions – neighbors helping neighbors, a commitment to the greater good, innovation, and collective problem solving.

Further, national service has a positive impact on those who serve. Service helps bridge ethnic, racial, religious, and economic divides. It builds civic responsibility and enables participants to practice responsible citizenship. It helps youth make the transition into adulthood. It enables seniors to leave a legacy. Through service, members of a community become citizens, rather than spectators, participating more fully in the civic life of the nation. In addition, through service, individuals develop skills and gain valuable experience critical to their future success. These principles were first incorporated into a practical modern-day national service program by President Johnson in the early 1960s. By signing the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Johnson created Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) and enlisted ordinary Americans in his "war on poverty." Those who answered his call began serving at migrant camps in California, poor regions of the Appalachians and low-income neighborhoods throughout the country.

NATIONAL SERVICE TODAY

Today, the draw of national service continues to attract attention from a wide cross section of the county, from everyday Americans to policymakers in Washington, D.C. National service has grown over the past four decades and continues to evolve. Since President Johnson's creation of VISTA, thousands of Americans have served their communities through existing and newly created national service programs.

With his 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush created the USA Freedom Corps, a major initiative that seeks to foster a new culture of "citizenship, service and responsibility." By participating in the Freedom Corps, Americans are building the capacity of voluntary groups that assist their fellow countrymen both in times of crisis and in daily life. As part of the USA Freedom Corps initiative, the President has asked all Americans to serve 4,000 hours, or the equivalent of two years, over the course of their lifetime.

THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Created in 1993, the Corporation for National and Community Service ("the Corporation") oversees three major programs that engage approximately 2.5 million Americans each year in meeting community needs. These three programs include:

- *AmeriCorps* – engages thousands of Americans on a full- or part-time basis to help communities address their toughest challenges;
- *Learn and Serve America* – engages K-12 and higher education students in service activities that link to their academic curriculum; and,
- *National Senior Service Corps* – uses the skills, talents, and experiences of older Americans to help make communities stronger, safer, and healthier.

The programs and activities of the Corporation are a major component of the USA Freedom Corps. The Corporation helps assure that government supports the volunteer efforts of individuals, organizations, and communities. Specifically, the Corporation's mission is: to support people and organizations in using citizen service as a strategy to meet critical national and community needs; to foster an ethic of civic responsibility; and, to strengthen the ties that bind us together as a nation. The Corporation continues to strive to:

- *Support and encourage greater engagement of citizens in volunteering.* The Corporation will reform and enhance national and community service programs to increase the quantity and quality of service opportunities for Americans.
- *Make federal funds more responsive to state and local needs.* The Corporation will give state, local, and community officials more authority and flexibility to provide service opportunities to the citizens they represent.
- *Make federal support more accountable and effective.* The Corporation will invest in service opportunities that will produce results for local communities.
- *Provide greater assistance to faith-based and small community-based organizations.* The Corporation will include more organizations of this type in more national and community service programs.

AMERICORPS

AmeriCorps provides thousands of Americans of all ages and backgrounds with intensive full- and part-time opportunities to serve their communities and build the capacity of grassroots organizations to meet local environmental, educational, public safety, or other human needs. AmeriCorps joins a long tradition of programs that encourage and reward service – programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Montgomery GI Bill, and the Peace Corps. In return for their service, AmeriCorps participants, known as members, receive a modest living allowance and an education award that can be used towards existing college loans or to pay continuing education costs. Collaborations that sponsor AmeriCorps programs recruit, select, and train their own AmeriCorps members, design and operate their local programs, and are responsible for providing funds and other resources to match the federal funds they receive through their AmeriCorps grant.

In the short time since AmeriCorps' inception in 1994, its members have achieved impressive results. More than 250,000 individuals are alumni of the program, and now take their place as the next generation of community leaders, educators, health professionals, and the like. In 2004, approximately 75,000 AmeriCorps members are serving in communities throughout the country. Goals of AmeriCorps include:

- *Getting Things Done.* AmeriCorps helps communities meet needs in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs through direct and demonstrable service.
- *Strengthening Communities.* AmeriCorps builds the capacity of community organizations and other institutions to more effectively engage community volunteers to improve our communities.
- *Encouraging Responsibility.* Through service and civic education, AmeriCorps members become agents of community solutions and develop an ethic of lifelong service.
- *Expanding Opportunity.* AmeriCorps helps those who help America. Members develop professional skills, gain invaluable experience and receive education awards for education or job training.

The AmeriCorps national service network includes AmeriCorps*State and National programs, Indian Tribe and U.S. Territories programs, the Education Awards Program, AmeriCorps*Promise Fellows, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and AmeriCorps*NCCC. For more information about these various AmeriCorps programs, please visit www.americorps.org.

CALIFORNIA SERVICE CORPS (CSC)

The mission of the California Service Corps is to provide meaningful forms of volunteerism and service to the people of California who wish to strengthen and support their state through service. Previously known as the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GO SERV), CSC has benefited from an enhanced mission, new name and new honorary chair (First Lady Maria Shriver) through an executive order issued in August 2004.

CSC is committed to uniting individuals in service to their communities and achieving demonstrable results by addressing California's persistent unmet human, educational, public safety, and environmental needs. To this end, it selects and administers AmeriCorps grants under the provisions of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. During the 2004-05 program year, more than 5,000 AmeriCorps members will serve under the sponsorship of 61 public-private partnerships to meet critical state needs. Since its inception, CSC has secured and disseminated over $200 million in AmeriCorps funding from the Corporation to local and statewide public and nonprofit agencies that have created opportunities for over 40,000 AmeriCorps members to serve in California. CSC provides AmeriCorps programs with extensive training and ongoing technical assistance to support the development of high quality AmeriCorps programs. Each program works closely with a CSC program officer to ensure progress towards program objectives, a meaningful service experience for AmeriCorps members, and compliance with applicable regulations.

In its role as the state Point of Contact for Citizen Corps, a program of the USA Freedom Corps, CSC collaborates with leading organizations from the emergency response, non-governmental relief and volunteer fields to expand the engagement of community members in preventing, mitigating, preparing for, and responding to disasters and other emergencies, including acts of terrorism. Grant funds support the development of Citizen Corps Councils that coordinate efforts among first responders, such as police and fire departments, with relief organizations and service organizations that mobilize volunteers for disaster assistance. In addition, CSC supports Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for volunteers in the areas of disaster preparedness, light search and rescue, fire suppression and first aid.

CSC also supports the Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning that has annually provided grants to provide opportunities for California school children to participate in service that embodies the life, work, and values of Cesar E. Chavez.

Beyond its grantmaking responsibilities, CSC seeks to promote volunteer opportunities throughout the state and honor those who serve. It strives to increase the number of Californians who volunteer in their communities, make volunteer opportunities more accessible and promote effective volunteer management.

SPECIAL NOTICE: AMERICORPS RULEMAKING

The Corporation is engaged in a rulemaking process centered on key issues involving the AmeriCorps program. The goal of rulemaking is to bring a far greater degree of predictability and reliability for grantees, position the program for stronger growth, and to make AmeriCorps more efficient, effective and accountable. In February 2004, President Bush issued an executive order aimed at making national and community service programs better able to engage Americans in volunteering, more responsive to state and local needs, more accountable and effective, and more accessible to grassroots organizations. In addition, the Congress and the Corporation's Board of Directors have directed the agency to address certain issues through rulemaking.

The content of the proposed rule could have a significant impact on the provisions which govern AmeriCorps programs. Issues that are addressed in rulemaking include questions of whether to increase the required grantee match, reserve a portion of the Corporation's annual AmeriCorps appropriations for grants to new applicants, or permit waivers for programs that may not be able to meet increased match requirements.

From mid-March through early April 2004, the Corporation held five public meetings and four conference calls on rulemaking to solicit input on a variety of key issues including sustainability, federal share of program costs, and performance measurement. The Corporation also solicited input before drafting the proposed rules in order to harness the ideas and creativity of people with an interest in national and community service. More than 500 people took advantage of the opportunity to provide input through conference calls, public meetings and written comments.

The Corporation is in the process of drafting a final rule, which will be published in the Federal Register. For more information on the rulemaking process, please visit www.americorps.org/rulemaking.

GENERAL GRANT INFORMATION

KEY ELEMENTS FOR 2005 AMERICORPS PROGRAMS

In early 2002, the Corporation announced plans to reform and enhance its programs, consistent with four principles and reforms: support and encourage greater engagement of citizens in volunteering, make federal funds more responsive to state and local needs, make federal support more accountable and effective, and provide greater assistance to community organizations (secular and faith-based).

In order to achieve these goals, the Corporation has developed a set of key elements for the 2005-06 program year. Applicants are advised that the Corporation expects programs to effectively address the following elements in their proposals:

- *Performance Measures/Accountability.* The Corporation will continue to help strengthen the accountability and performance of programs receiving funds under national service laws.

- *Recruitment and Management of Volunteers.* The Corporation has declared that a fundamental purpose of AmeriCorps is to help recruit, support, and manage the vast networks of volunteers assisting nonprofit organizations in meeting community needs. With the President's call for all Americans to serve two years – 4,000 hours – in their lifetimes, AmeriCorps has been called upon to make volunteer recruitment and management a major focus of its efforts.

- *Support for Community Organizations (Secular and Faith-Based).* Applicants are encouraged to support the efforts of civic, community, educational, and faith-based organizations to solve local problems and meet critical needs of individuals and communities. Programs should demonstrate partnerships (sub-grantees, host sites, or volunteer recruitment partnerships) with faith-based or secular community organizations.

- *Civic Engagement.* A basic purpose of The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, is to "renew the ethic of civic responsibility and the spirit of community throughout the United States." The Corporation will continue to work with programs to introduce and deliver an enriched civics training program for members. The training will focus on what it means to be an American citizen, the responsibilities of democratic citizenship, and the obligations of freedom.

- *Literacy and Tutoring Programs.* A significant percentage of programs supported by the Corporation provide tutoring and other support to assist children in learning to read. The No Child Left Behind Act, enacted by the Congress in 2001, sets new scientifically-based standards for programs in schools across the country. Programs must demonstrate that their activities incorporate scientifically-based approaches to reading. Specifically, programs proposing tutoring and other literacy activities should describe the curricula, tutor training, outcomes, and standards for tutors they will employ in their applications.

- *Capacity Building and Sustainability.* The Corporation views capacity building as a process that enables an organization to gain greater independence and sustainability. It views its program grants as investments expected to yield a set of self-sustaining activities over time. The Corporation expects programs to work toward the ultimate goal of continuing national and community service activities beyond the life of a Corporation grant or with diminishing Corporation resources.

- *Federal Work-Study and Student Service.* Federal law requires that all institutions of higher education devote at least seven percent of their Federal Work-Study (FWS) funds to community service unless they receive a waiver from the Department of Education. Applicants that are institutions of higher education must describe compliance with this requirement and efforts to support community service under FWS. The Corporation will take into consideration an institution's level of community service under FWS in making grant decisions.

Details on these elements will be found in appropriate sections throughout the RFP.

AMERICORPS EDUCATION AWARDS PROGRAMS

Education Awards Program grants are designed for organizations that currently have positions similar to AmeriCorps members, such as state and local conservation corps. It is assumed that Education Awards Program grantees currently offer participant benefits and resources such as living allowances/stipends, housing, health care, etc. Therefore, AmeriCorps Education Award Programs are not required to provide members with child care, a living allowance or health care. Grantees may request up to $400 per full-time equivalent (FTE) member to offset a minor portion of program management costs. The Corporation will also provide education awards for those members who successfully complete a term of service.

Experience suggests that programs who do not offer benefits such as living allowances and health care have extreme difficulty recruiting and retaining members. You are encouraged to consider this as you prepare your application.

ELIGIBILITY

- *Community Partnerships/CLASPs.* CSC continues its longstanding practice of supporting strong community partnerships that utilize AmeriCorps resources to develop thoughtful and comprehensive strategies to address the challenges that face California's communities. Therefore, all applicants are required to develop a CLASP – California Local Area Service Partnership. CLASPs are locally defined public-private partnerships that must include *a minimum of three independent organizations*. CLASPs are required to ensure that AmeriCorps programs are reflective of the communities in which they serve, are supported by the community, and assist the program in instituting long-term change and sustainable solutions to community needs. Partners may include, but are not limited to: community-based organizations; senior and youth organizations; K-12 schools, colleges, and universities; churches and faith-based organizations; local, state, and federal government agencies; businesses and foundations; health care organizations; and, other national service programs. At a minimum, *a CLASP must have at least one public and one private partner (non-profit or for-profit entity)*.

The primary members of the CLASP must include at least three independent organizations, each of which must have significant roles in planning, operating, and sustaining the program. Other members of the CLASP should have ongoing roles and/or provide other contributions such as training resources, to ensure the success of the program. All CLASP members should be identified on the CLASP Form submitted as part of the application package.

GRANT PARAMETERS

- *Fixed Cost Awards.* The Education Awards Program offers fixed cost awards of up to $400 per FTE. These grants will reduce the administrative burden related to grant management and fiscal reporting for grantees.

  Programs are not required to keep separate records to document expenditures or provide financial status reports. Instead, the actual amount of the grant is explicitly tied to member enrollment. Generally, a program that fails to enroll members for whom it was awarded grant funds may not be entitled to those funds.

  Grantees may treat the grant funds as funds available to support the program overall. Education Award Program grants do not require adherence to Federal Cost Principles. However, Federal Administrative Requirements do apply to grantees, as defined in the Education Award Program provisions that accompany a grant award.

- *Minimum Program Size.* In order to provide member positions in quantities that make an impact on the identified community need, CSC policies require that applicants request no fewer than 20 full-time equivalent (FTE) AmeriCorps members as part of their application. Exceptions to this policy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with compelling justification provided by the applicant in the program narrative. Under no circumstances will CSC accept applications for fewer than 10 FTE AmeriCorps members. Programs in CSC's 2004-05 portfolio range from 11 to 377 FTE members, with an average program size of 52 FTE members. For details on calculating FTE, please see page 27.

- *Grant Period.* Grants awarded through this selection process will support programming beginning the fall of 2005. The Corporation and CSC generally provide funding for a three-year grant period, assuming demonstrated success toward achieving program objectives and the completion of a yearly continuation request. Applications for 2005 must include proposed activities for the first year of operation. However, performance measures and the application narrative should also provide programmatic information for the entire three-year period for which funding is requested.

- *Expansion Opportunities During the Grant Period.* Applicants should be advised that expansion opportunities in the second and third year of a grant period may be extremely limited or unavailable. As a result, applicants should not expect to expand program operations in the second or third year of the grant period.

PROGRAM DESIGN ELEMENTS

PROGRAM DESIGN OVERVIEW

Across California, AmeriCorps provides a variety of specific and identifiable services to communities. For example, your program may use AmeriCorps members to organize volunteers to renovate low-income housing or build a playground in a vacant lot. You may engage members in human service projects such as tutoring or mentoring and recruit local volunteers to do so. Members may restore streams or urban parks alongside community residents. AmeriCorps members may help recruit, support, and manage community volunteers who support disaster preparedness. Members may perform a variety of indirect service activities that enhance the capacity of the community-based organizations in which they serve, including raising funds to support approved projects and conducting research to maximize the impact of the organization.

In the past, performing *direct service* activities such as tutoring children, building houses, or delivering meals to homebound seniors has been the primary focus of AmeriCorps members' service. However, AmeriCorps is now increasing its emphasis on *indirect service* activities such as volunteer recruitment and management. Successful applicants will now use both direct and indirect service to build effective and sustainable national service programs. Although the Corporation expects all programs to integrate this new approach into their designs, it will give additional consideration to those applicants that can demonstrate that their indirect service components build the capacity of faith-based and community-based organizations.

Local involvement and input are vital to the development of high-quality service programs that sustain and build communities. Successful programs will be those that use extensive, broad-based local input to design, implement, and evaluate their projects. This includes consultation with:

- representatives from the communities the program serves;
- program members (or potential members); and,
- appropriate community agencies (secular and faith-based), businesses, foundations, local labor organizations representing employees of service sponsors, and local government.

The activities members engage in will fall into one of three categories:

- *Needs and Service Activities* – direct service that addresses the identified need;
- *Strengthening Communities* – indirect service activities, including volunteer recruitment and management; and,
- *Member Development* – the training members receive to complete their service, including civics trainings and training related to service activities.

Applicants will develop performance measures in each of the three categories that quantify the impact of member service activities.

As a general rule, AmeriCorps members devote 80 percent of their service hours towards the program's activities in the areas of *Needs and Service Activities* and *Strengthening Communities*. Of this 80 percent, the majority of member service hours should support direct service activities with the balance (as determined by the program) supporting indirect service activities. The remaining 20 percent of service hours are directed towards providing members the training they need to successfully complete service activities. Common program models include those in which members serve four days per week and receive ongoing training one day per week.

CSC prefers program models that place members in teams of two or more at well-prepared placement sites with strong member supervision. In some instances, placement of members in teams may not be feasible. In such cases, CSC may approve program designs that place members individually when appropriate support structures are in place, including opportunities for frequent interaction, training, and reflection with other members.

Applicants should connect the identified community need with the AmeriCorps member service activities, as well as the outcome of the proposed program. Further, successful applicants will, in the aggregate, clearly and logically make a compelling argument that:

- identifies and substantiates the critical and persistent community need(s) to be met;
- identifies the gap in services available to meet that need;
- describes why AmeriCorps members, and not existing staff or other community volunteers, are an appropriate strategy to address the identified need;
- describes the specific service activities of AmeriCorps members;
- describes plans for ensuring that members will effectively carry out these activities – including their recruitment, selection, training, supervision, and other support activities; and,
- describes the results of member service activities and how such results will be measured.

EXAMPLES OF MEMBER SERVICE ACTIVITIES

In meeting local community needs, AmeriCorps supports a wide variety of activities in the issue areas of education, environment, public safety, and other human needs. Examples in each of the issue areas include:

Education
- Members serving in low performing schools and providing targeted tutoring in language arts and math to students who tested below grade level;
- Placing members as service-learning coordinators in schools and afterschool programs;
- Utilizing college students, particularly federal college work-study students, to tutor children in both during and afterschool programs;
- Faith-based programs that provide literacy and English as a Second Language training for low-income adults, reading improvement for homeless elementary school-age children, or teach and model social skills to children; and,
- Improving the quality and availability of child development programs by serving in day care and Head Start centers and preschool programs.

Environment
- Eliminating environmental risks, especially those that affect children and youth, such as lead poisoning and radon exposure;
- Creating a full-time year round youth corps or summer youth corps program undertaking service projects with visible public benefits, including natural resource projects;
- Revitalizing neighborhoods by creating playgrounds, green spaces and community gardens and by making unused public areas clean and safe; and,
- Assessing, restoring and stewarding local watersheds.

Health and Human Needs
- Offering prenatal care, parenting education and health care to families of young children;
- Improving health of low-income communities by conducting outreach and offering preventive health services, including immunization, through community health clinics;
- Addressing public health concerns, including bioterrorism, by providing resources to the community through door-to-door contact, school-based meetings, community meetings, and other means;
- Helping individuals who are homeless, particularly families, by providing shelter support, assisting in moving into permanent housing and related services; and,
- Introducing college students to careers in health care through placements in community health clinics and other clinical settings.

Public Safety
- Enhancing community policing efforts by working with local law enforcement to develop specific crime prevention strategies targeted at key locations such as playgrounds and other public gathering places for children and youth;
- Reducing crime against children and youth by making schools safe, creating safe havens and involving youth in conflict resolution and prevention efforts;
- Programs where members provide community disaster/emergency preparedness education and training to individuals, families, and community organizations (secular and faith-based);
- Providing prevention activities for illegal drug use and intervention support for children and youth; and,
- Serving as outreach specialists as a means to deter domestic violence and child abuse.

Although the service activities of programs may cross several issue areas, successful applicants will focus the activities of members on those that the legal applicant and other partnering organizations have specific expertise in, and that directly relate to, the community need. For example, a program focused on increasing the academic success of children should not feel compelled to address issues related to public safety, unless doing so significantly contributes to the program design.

NEEDS AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES
Your program must provide opportunities for your community to define its problems and to solve them. You must be able to demonstrate that your program or the service you offer provides a direct benefit that the community values and that existing funds or volunteers do not

already provide this service. In addition, your program's service activities must demonstrate positive impact on the communities that it serves.

The *Needs and Service Activities* section should describe the need(s) of the involved communities, how the need has been identified, and how the program will identify the need, including, but not limited to, member service activities.

- *Community Need.* Successful applicants will document a compelling community need through statistics or other relevant information that is of importance to the community. Such statistics should document the scope and severity of the need to be addressed by the AmeriCorps program, and avoid those that provide a portrait of the health of the community as a whole.

- *Why AmeriCorps.* Successful applicants will clearly describe why AmeriCorps resources represent an effective strategy for addressing the identified need. In describing the activities of the proposed program, applicants must clearly describe member service activities and how members will effectively respond to and ameliorate the identified need(s) of the community. In addition, they should describe how the education awards will add value to the program and increase or enhance the program's impact in the community. This "value added" may be established by:
  - increasing the number of members participating in the service program;
  - launching new service sites or new service activities;
  - increasing the number of hours of community service provided;
  - expanding the role of community volunteers in the program;
  - improving the caliber or diversity of members enrolled; or,
  - promoting other strategies to expand the program or enhance its impact on the community.

- *Tutoring Programs.* Tutoring programs are defined as those that use AmeriCorps members to provide planned, consistent, one-to-one or small group activities that build on students' strengths and target students' needs, with the ultimate goal of developing and improving academic performance. Most commonly, AmeriCorps tutoring programs provide literacy tutoring.

  Applicants proposing tutoring programs must address the following elements describing their tutoring program in the application narrative:

  Curricula
  Your application should describe the relationship between the proposed curricula and tutoring strategies and school, state or district standards.

  Standards for Tutors
  Your program should identify any standards that you propose to use to qualify individuals as tutors. For example, some programs may screen individuals through a qualifications test; others may require enrollment in, or completion of, a reading course. Still others may require demonstration of certain academic skills, such as completing at least two years of college.

Tutor Training

Tutor training should take place both before and throughout the term of service and give tutors the skills and knowledge to support student learning. Programs may also, where appropriate, demonstrate school site participation in training design and implementation and/or evidence of linkages between the instructional program of the tutee's school district and content of tutoring sessions conducted after school.

Outcomes

Your application should identify student achievement goals and show links between program performance measures, tutoring activities, tutor training, and proposed strategies for achieving these goals.

Applicants proposing literacy tutoring must assure that tutoring activities are consistent with The No Child Left Behind Act. A key element of this plan is to support reading instruction built upon research-based methods that work to ensure that every child in public schools reads at or above grade level by third grade. Successful applicants conducting literacy tutoring programs will be those that demonstrate that their activities occur in sites that incorporate scientifically-based approaches[1] to reading, including those identified by the National Reading Panel. Additional information regarding the No Child Left Behind Act is available at www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbreference/index.html?src=mr.

- *Mentoring Programs.* Applicants proposing mentoring activities should assure that such activities are consistent with *Recommended Best Practices for Mentoring Programs*, as outlined by the Governor's Mentoring Partnership. Additional information regarding the Governor's Mentoring Partnership and the best practices are located at www.mentoring.ca.gov.

- *Collaboration with Other National Service Programs.* Both the Corporation and CSC encourage applicants to begin or continue collaborative relationships with other national service programs. Although such collaboration is not a selection criterion for this year's funding decisions, it is likely to be so in the future. The Corporation defines collaboration as a mutually beneficial relationship entered into by two or more organizations or programs to achieve a common goal. Many examples of national service programs collaborating to provide more effective service exist, including:

  - The San Francisco Experience Corps has successfully blended its own cadre of volunteers with AmeriCorps and Senior Corps resources. San Francisco Experience Corps is an independent program that develops caring relationships with children through tutoring and mentoring during the school day and in afterschool programs. Program participants tutor one-on-one or in small groups, provide classroom assistance, and assist in afterschool programs. They also support youth in enrichment activities, playing games, reading books, or developing programs for children based on their own unique backgrounds and experiences. The program has assigned a VISTA as the volunteer

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1 For information about the five basic reading components, scientifically-based reading instruction, and the National Reading Panel, see http://www.nwrel.org/learns.

coordinator as the Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center. In the course of the VISTA's service, the VISTA works with participants that include AmeriCorps members of all ages, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) participants, Experience Corps' own volunteer corps members, and the occasional Foster Grandparent.

- The SCALES (Schools and Children Engaged in Learning and Service) project is a school-based Learn and Serve program administered by a local school district. SCALES utilizes AmeriCorps members as service-learning coordinators at schools throughout the district. Once members are trained on service-learning concepts and best practices, the district then places them with individual teachers that use service-learning at participating schools. Working with their assigned teacher/supervisor, members research potential projects, conduct outreach to establish relationships with community partners, identify and secure service project resources and/or supplies, act as liaisons between teachers and community partners, and make arrangements for the service project activities. Finally, the members deepen their own understanding of service-learning principles by helping their teachers conduct post-activity reflection sessions with their students.

- *Homeland Security and Emergency/Disaster Preparedness and Response.* CSC continues to be interested in funding high-quality programs involved in community-based homeland security and emergency preparedness and response efforts.

  At the most basic level, every CSC-funded AmeriCorps program is required to develop an emergency plan to ensure the safety of program members and staff and a continuity plan for ongoing program operations in the event of an emergency. These plans should address policies and procedures to guide personnel and organize resources to ensure the safety and security of AmeriCorps members and program staff. In addition, these plans should offer strategies and contingencies to permit the program to continue operating and potentially offer limited assistance to first responders, emergency management agencies, and disaster relief organizations.

  The Corporation has adopted the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) definition of homeland security as "appropriately engaging citizens and communities in preparedness and response to acts of terrorism and other disasters. Homeland security includes programs that prepare to minimize the damage and recovery from any emergency, natural or man-made."

  The Corporation distinguishes homeland security programs from other AmeriCorps public safety, public health, and disaster preparedness and response programs: "While many of the day to day activities may be similar, homeland security programs also focus on preparing communities to be able to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, and respond to acts of terrorism or other disasters that breach the security and safety of their citizens." Applications submitted under this issue area should include evidence of organizing, training, and preparing people for homeland security disasters and/or emergencies.

  AmeriCorps programs can contribute to homeland security in a variety of ways. Some program designs may focus member service hours exclusively on homeland security activities such as those illustrated in the examples that follow. Other programs will provide

specialized emergency training to AmeriCorps members whose service activity focuses on another need, such as education or the environment.

Examples of homeland security programs include those that, *in partnership with appropriate public safety agencies*, develop systems to:

- mobilize trained volunteers to assist first responders such as police/sheriff departments, fire/rescue departments, emergency management agencies, and other agencies involved in public security;
- provide support for professional or volunteer fire departments, including managing volunteer programs, assisting with fire prevention and outreach, public education, and emergency response;
- organize, conduct, and support community-based immunization programs related to bioterrorism public health concerns;
- provide immediate support to response agencies responding to a disaster or other emergency. Services may include relief of rescue workers, search and rescue, first aid, coordination of emergency supplies, and establishment of communication links for response workers;
- organize communities to identify and respond to crime through existing community organizations, law enforcement, schools, institutions of higher education, and the business community. Such programs may conduct needs assessments and identify resources to support improvements, such as the creation of Neighborhood or Business Watch programs; and,
- support the activities and capacity building efforts of Citizen Corps Councils.

The above serve as a small number of examples. Local communities are in the best position to determine appropriate strategies for integrating service and volunteerism with professional emergency response activities.

Successful applicants will be those that, in collaboration with the appropriate partner agencies and organizations, develop clear plans to engage volunteers, including AmeriCorps members, in preparing for and responding to disasters and other emergencies, including acts of terrorism. Following a large-scale, community-wide emergency, well-coordinated strategies are needed to utilize spontaneous and trained volunteers to meet a community's immediate needs. CSC seeks programs that train community members and build capacity for volunteers to respond effectively following a disaster.

CSC strongly encourages all programs to provide the basic CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training to all AmeriCorps members to enable them to be a resource for their families, neighbors, and the organizations in which they serve. This training takes approximately 20 hours to complete and includes basic First Aid as well as procedures for responding to all hazards, including a recently added terrorism module. Contact your local fire department or American Red Cross chapter to locate a CERT training provider. In your community the program may have a different (but related) name such as NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Team).

To learn more about established emergency response networks, contact your local city or county emergency management office or the regional office of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) which can be located through the OES website at www.oes.ca.gov.   Other contacts include Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), whose members include traditional nonprofit relief organizations such as the American Red Cross and The Salvation Army, and first responder organizations, such as fire/rescue and police/sheriff departments.

CSC is the state Point of Contact for Citizen Corps, a program of the USA Freedom Corps. Citizen Corps Councils work to coordinate efforts among first responders, such as police and fire departments, with relief organizations as well as service and volunteer organizations that organize volunteers for disaster assistance. A local Citizen Corps Council may exist in your community. More information regarding Citizen Corps is available on the CSC website – www.csc.ca.gov.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

AmeriCorps expands opportunities, helping those who help America. Through AmeriCorps, members develop additional skills, gain valuable experience, and receive education awards that they can use to repay qualified school loans or for future education.

To help ensure that members are prepared for, and benefit from their service, applicants are required to include plans for member recruitment and training in their applications, including training elements related to civic education and skill training required to perform service activities. Applicants are encouraged to address elements such as leadership opportunities and other training necessary for a program to have a long-term positive impact on members, including opportunities to explore educational and career choices. Further, training should reflect the unique nature of your program and be appropriate for the age, skill level, and other differences in the backgrounds of the members.

By the end of their term of service, AmeriCorps members should:

- discuss and explore their community and the people, processes, and institutions most effective in improving community conditions;
- develop the skills to help plan effective service projects that respond to real community needs and emergencies;
- foster within themselves and others positive attitudes regarding the value of lifelong citizenship and service for the common good;
- have new or increased existing life and/or employment skills; and,
- gain a greater appreciation and understanding of those from different backgrounds.

- *Member Training Plans.* Members must receive an initial orientation that includes information regarding the community in which they serve, the history of national service, expectations of members, and specific training regarding the service they will provide. Whether member activities involve tutoring children in reading, housing provision and improvement, or neighborhood/community enhancement, members need to learn the basic

skills and technical information associated with good practice before they perform service. In addition, members must receive ongoing training that supplements their initial orientation and provides added depth to their service experience. Training that must be provided in the ongoing training plan include:

- *Civic Education* – All members must receive civics training – please see the section on civic education below for more information regarding requirements; and,
- *Support Services* – Programs are **required** to support members who are high school dropouts in earning the equivalent of a high school diploma (GED). Programs are encouraged to support GED efforts that are clearly linked to higher education.

Programs may also wish to include the following elements in their plans for initial orientation and ongoing training:

- *Conflict Management* – Training for effectively managing conflict;
- *Communication Skills* – Skill development that assists members in becoming more effective communicators;
- *Teambuilding* – Activities that help build a team environment and esprit de corps among members;
- *Leadership Development* – Training that assists members in developing leadership skills;
- *Diversity Training* – Training that helps members appreciate the differences between team members and the larger community;
- *First Aid/CPR* – Programs are encouraged to train members in basic first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR);
- *CERT Training* – Please see page 18 for more information regarding CERT training – this training includes basic first aid and CPR;
- *Life After AmeriCorps* – A resource available from the Corporation that assists members transition from their AmeriCorps experience; and,
- *Career Exploration* – Training and education that allows members to explore career possibilities in areas such as child development, teaching, public health, or public safety.

- ***Civic Education.*** The Corporation is committed to ensuring that citizenship skills are a key ingredient in the lives of every AmeriCorps member and AmeriCorps program. To this end, civic education continues to be a priority in member development plans. A successful applicant will provide training for its members and use the service experience to help them acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for active civic engagement. This growth will be measured through a common *Strengthening Communities* performance measure that CSC has developed. For more information, please see the *2005 AmeriCorps Education Awards Program Forms and Instructions*.

  Three years ago, the Corporation partnered with a number of programs across the country to test the use and the impact of two curricula: *By the People* developed by the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the

University of Minnesota, and *A Guide to Effective Citizenship Through National Service* developed by the Constitutional Rights Foundation. This experience has led the Constitutional Rights Foundation to develop a new combined, comprehensive curriculum: *Active Citizens: AmeriCorps in Service to America*, along with a condensed version: *Active Citizens 101*.

The comprehensive curriculum, *Active Citizens: AmeriCorps in Service to America,* is designed to assist national service grantees in developing and implementing member development plans that meet the Corporation's recommended goals for civic education. The condensed version, *Active Citizens 101,* contains a selected number of lessons that nonetheless allow most programs the flexibility to meet basic, minimum civic education member development objectives regardless of the particular structure or circumstances of the program. Further information on the Corporation's citizenship initiative is available at www.nationalserviceresources.org.

Although the curricula above are available to all programs, adoption of either curriculum is not mandatory. AmeriCorps programs continue to have the flexibility to determine the specific methods and materials used to conduct their own civics training; however, successful applications will describe which materials or curriculum they intend to use in this component of member development.

In designing a civic education program for AmeriCorps members, applicants should be aware of the activities prohibited to staff and members while they are supported by AmeriCorps or other Corporation funding. These include attempting to influence legislation, engaging in partisan political activities, and participating in, or endorsing, activities that include advocacy for or against political parties. For more information on these and other prohibited activities, refer to page 30.

- *Member Supervision.* As the experience of Corporation programs across the country demonstrates, successful member development depends upon appropriate supervision and coaching. Programs are required to have qualified supervisors to provide members with regular and adequate oversight. Successful applicants will describe plans to provide members with close supervisory support, modeling behavior expected of a member while giving guidance on a consistent basis. Supervisors must be trained on AmeriCorps policies and procedures. Members may not serve as the legal supervisor of other members.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

AmeriCorps strengthens communities by involving citizens directly in serving community needs. AmeriCorps members support *Strengthening Communities* objectives in many ways, including volunteer recruitment and management, capacity building, or indirect service activities, as well as community awareness events such as national service days. All applicants are required to include a volunteer recruitment and management component in their program design.

- *Recruitment and Management of Volunteers.* While AmeriCorps members and "traditional" volunteers have much in common, a distinction has been frequently made between the two. More often than not, AmeriCorps members serve intensively over a period

of one or two years and traditional volunteers commonly, but not always, serve less intensively. Though this distinction can be unclear, for years AmeriCorps programs have demonstrated the benefits of integrating the efforts of AmeriCorps members and volunteers.

Interest continues to grow in expanding the efforts of AmeriCorps to increase volunteer engagement and effectiveness. With the President's call for all Americans to serve two years – 4,000 hours – in their lifetimes, AmeriCorps has been called upon to make volunteer recruitment and management a major focus of its efforts. Research conducted both nationally and statewide has revealed a great untapped interest in volunteering constrained by limited capacity to recruit, manage, and ensure meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Both CSC and the Corporation have adopted policies that reflect an increased emphasis on the recruitment and management of volunteers by AmeriCorps programs. By creating volunteer opportunities and helping organizations to effectively engage volunteers, AmeriCorps programs multiply their impact, build organizational capacity, and support the development of sustainable programs. *The Corporation has declared recruiting, supporting, and managing volunteers to be a fundamental purpose of AmeriCorps and has made volunteer recruitment and management a requirement for all AmeriCorps programs.* If you are unable to include volunteer recruitment and management as part of your program, either because of your program model or for any other reason, please include an explanation in the program narrative that will be considered during the application review process. Otherwise, applicants are required to measure the impact of their volunteer recruitment and management activities as one of their performance measures.

CSC has created a standardized performance measure that will assist applicants in quantifying the volunteer component of their proposed program. This measure is designed to operate in conjunction with the Corporation's efforts to develop common performance measures in the area of volunteer recruitment and management to facilitate consistent reporting among all programs. Funded programs may be required to work with the Corporation or CSC and further develop this measure in grant negotiations. For more information on the standardized measure, please consult the *2005 AmeriCorps Education Awards Program Forms and Instructions*.

Applicants have flexibility to determine the best approach for effectively involving volunteers in your program. Volunteers should be engaged in ways that support the objectives of the program being proposed. *In other words, the involvement of volunteers should enhance or build upon any direct service goals of the program of which the AmeriCorps members are a part.* In addition to articulating the direct service impacts of volunteers, successful applicants will be those that address how their AmeriCorps program will effectively recruit, screen, match, train, supervise, retain, recognize, and support volunteers.

Programs can deploy AmeriCorps members in a wide variety of ways to support volunteer recruitment and management. For example, AmeriCorps members may be responsible for:

- enlisting, training, coordinating and supervising volunteers;

- helping an organization develop effective volunteer management systems that include clear position descriptions, screening and matching techniques, and volunteer policy and procedure manuals; or
- promoting retention of volunteers by planning recognition events or providing ongoing support to ensure that volunteers have a high quality experience.

Programs may decide that a few members in a program should be devoted entirely to some aspect of volunteer recruitment and management. Or, programs may determine that all members will spend a portion of their time supporting volunteers. Members may also create opportunities for the beneficiaries of their service to volunteer. Examples include:

- AmeriCorps members in a teacher corps program engage their students in service-learning projects that support classroom learning and provide students with volunteer experience;
- An AmeriCorps program designates a small number of members as volunteer managers who focus their efforts on recruiting and supporting volunteers whose activities complement the direct service of the rest of the corps;
- AmeriCorps members tutoring in an afterschool program recruit volunteers to read with students once a week so that the program can serve additional students; and,
- An entire corps of AmeriCorps members is dedicated to serving as volunteer coordinators at various local host sites to assist these organizations in recruiting, training, and managing volunteers.

More information regarding volunteer recruitment and management is available in Appendix C.

- *Capacity Building.* Historically, AmeriCorps members have served in direct service roles such as tutoring, and AmeriCorps*VISTA members in indirect service (capacity building) roles such as fundraising. The exception to this practice has been AmeriCorps members' recruitment and management of volunteers. Recently, both CSC and the Corporation have adopted policies that provide more flexibility for AmeriCorps members to serve in a broader range of indirect service activities.

All capacity building activities that AmeriCorps members engage in must increase the capacity of the program/placement site to generate increased direct service impacts through volunteers. Examples of these activities include:

- developing a volunteer handbook or training materials;
- developing written training materials, brochures, or websites that provide information not otherwise available from other sources, such as volunteer opportunities, disaster preparedness, or community services;
- conducting outreach to expand the number of individuals served by the member placement site;
- developing community partnerships that increase the direct service capacity of the placement site;
- securing media partners to help recruit volunteers; and,

- securing funds that increase the placement site's ability to support additional volunteers in direct service roles.

AmeriCorps members <u>may NOT be assigned roles that</u>:

- prepare grant applications for funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service or any other federal agency;
- are primarily clerical in nature or lead to the displacement of staff; or
- secure resources that instead of supporting the accomplishment of the program's direct service objectives, support other programs or the general operating budgets and resources of participating organizations.

Indirect service activities should not be the primary focus of member service activities. Indirect service activities should be included as part of a program's *Strengthening Communities* objectives.

- ***Support for Faith-Based and Small Community-Based Organizations.*** AmeriCorps has a long tradition of assisting faith-based and small community-based organizations. Since the program's inception, thousands of members have been directly placed at faith-based organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, the Notre Dame Mission Volunteer Program and the Church Council of Greater Seattle. Other members have supported the efforts of literacy programs managed by churches, small community organizations providing health services, etc. Although they are having a great impact on local communities, many of these organizations have not received assistance through public funding. It is CSC's intention to make AmeriCorps resources more accessible to faith-based organizations (FBOs) and small community-based organizations (CBOs) that may have little or no experience with government grants.

  CSC defines *faith-based organizations* as those entities that meet one or more of the following definitions:

  1. The entity is an organization, program or project sponsored/hosted by a religious congregation (must be incorporated as a 501 (c)(3) organization);
  2. The entity is a nonprofit organization founded by a religious congregation or religiously-motivated incorporators and board members that clearly states in its name, incorporation, or mission statement that it is a religiously-motivated institution; OR
  3. The entity is a collaboration of organizations that clearly and explicitly includes organizations from the previously described categories.

  A *small community-based organization* is defined by CSC as such if the entity is a non-profit organization with six or fewer full-time equivalent employees and an annual budget of less than $450,000.

  All applicants are encouraged to support the efforts of faith-based and small community-based organizations to meet local needs. In developing an application and strengthening

activities with faith-based and/or small community-based organizations, applicants should consult the Corporation's Faith-based Toolkit, available at – www.nationalserviceresources.org/initiatives/faces.

As noted above, in some instances, faith-based and small community-based organizations may be direct applicants for grant funding. In other cases, Corporation-funded programs might partner with such organizations to meet their objectives. In still other cases, Corporation grantees may serve as intermediaries.

Intermediary Organizations
Intermediary organizations provide the mechanism by which a number of faith-based and/or small community-based organizations may access AmeriCorps and other Corporation resources. Intermediaries are national, regional, state, or local organizations that agree to provide the technical and financial support to assist faith-based and/or small community-based organizations that do not have the capacity to perform these functions. Intermediaries serve as the legal applicant for a Corporation grant, thereby ensuring that the systems to manage a federal grant are in place. Intermediaries may place individual members at the sites of many neighborhood, community or faith-based organizations and assume responsibility for monitoring the progress of the sites.

Examples of programs providing support to community and faith-based organizations include:

• Serving as an intermediary, the Catholic Network of Volunteer Service placed over 2,000 AmeriCorps members through 120 national, state, and local faith-based organizations, including Jesuit Volunteer Corps, the Christian Appalachian Project, Lutheran Volunteer Corps and Holy Cross Associates. Across the country, these AmeriCorps members recruited an additional 35,000 volunteers, assisted over 30,000 homeless people, taught and/or tutored thousands of school children, and helped more than 8,000 low income pregnant women access prenatal care and other services.

• The National Council of Churches Ecumenical Program for Urban Service (EPRUS) has placed more than 5,000 members in communities throughout the country. AmeriCorps members serving through EPRUS have participated in a wide range of activities, including tutoring and leading groups of high school students in community service projects.

• The National Jewish Coalition for Literacy has placed members in eight cities to mobilize tutors and reading partners for children in kindergarten through third grade. In addition to serving as the primary conduit between the organized Jewish community and literacy programs in these cities, AmeriCorps members help promote involvement with childhood literacy programs within various Jewish community institutions.

For more information regarding partnering with faith-based and small community-based organizations, please consult Appendix A on page 44.

- ***Participation in National and State Days of Service.*** As part of the National Service Network, there are a number of opportunities for programs to take part in national service days. The Corporation and CSC expect all AmeriCorps programs to participate in one or more days of service, including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, National Youth Service Day, National Volunteer Week, Join Hands Day, One Day's Pay, Make a Difference Day, and National Family Volunteer Day. National service days provide programs with a mechanism by which to raise the profile of their program in the community and recruit community volunteers to participate in service events. Grant funds to support program involvement in such service days are often available from corporate sponsors. Please visit the Points of Light Foundation website – http://www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons - for more information regarding National Service Days. In California, CSC strongly encourages the involvement of programs in Cesar Chavez Day. For more information about this California holiday, please visit the CSC website – www.csc.ca.gov.

ISSUES RELATED TO AMERICORPS MEMBERS

Well-qualified and prepared AmeriCorps members are essential to the success of any quality AmeriCorps program. Programs are responsible for the recruitment and training of their members, and are encouraged to recruit members that reflect the characteristics of the communities in which they serve.

MEMBER TERMS OF SERVICE

- *Allowable Terms of Service.* Programs may engage members on a full-time or part-time basis. Full-time members must serve at least 1,700 hours during a period of not less than nine months and not more than one year. Each full-time member represents one full-time equivalent (FTE) position. Other member positions and their FTE conversions are as follows:

Term of Service	Minimum Number of Hours	FTE Conversion	Recommendations for Use
Full-time	1,700	1.0 FTE	
Half-time	900	0.5 FTE	
Reduced half-time	675	0.375 FTE	Only with approved exemption
Quarter-time	450	0.25 FTE	College students, afterschool programs, summer programs, others with similar program design needs
Minimum-time	300	0.2 FTE	College students, summer programs, others with similar program design needs

Programs that wish to utilize reduced half-time, quarter-time, and minimum-time positions should note the specific recommendations for their use. Programs that use such positions must ensure that the positions provide members <u>intensive</u> service experiences. For example, CSC will not support the use of a 300-hour position in a program where a member would serve 300 hours over the course of a calendar year, unless that member was a college student. Designing positions in this manner enables members to experience the intensive terms of service that AmeriCorps was designed to provide. Further, it ensures that members derive the maximum possible benefit from their term of service since they may only earn two education awards in the course of their lifetime. Each education award – regardless of size – counts against this lifetime limit.

In addition, CSC encourages programs to limit the number of member positions used in program designs. A program using multiple member positions, such as 1,700, 900, and 450, can be difficult to manage.

- *Member Eligibility for Additional Terms.* An individual may receive an education award for the first and second terms of service in an approved AmeriCorps position. (Please note that an unsuccessful or incomplete term counts as a term of service for these purposes). While members may, in some cases, serve more than one term, mere eligibility for an additional term of service does not guarantee selection or placement. Programs must base member eligibility for subsequent terms of service on at least a mid-term and end-of term evaluation of members' performance, that demonstrates but is not limited to: (1) members satisfactorily completing required number of hours; (2) members completing assignments, tasks or projects satisfactorily; and, (3) members performing satisfactorily in criteria that are clearly communicated both orally and in writing at the beginning of the term of service.

MEMBER ELIGIBILITY

An eligible member is an individual:

- who is a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States;
- who is at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service unless the member is out of school and:
    (a) enrolled in a full-time, year-round youth corps program or full-time summer program as defined in the Act (42 U.S.C. §12572 (a) (2)), in which case he or she must be between the ages of 16 and 25, inclusive; or,
    (b) enrolled in a program for economically disadvantaged youth as defined in the Act (42 U.S.C. §12572 (a)(9)), in which case he or she must be between the ages of 16 and 24, inclusive; or,
    (c) has a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate (or agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent before using an education award) and who has not dropped out of elementary or secondary school in order to enroll as an AmeriCorps member (unless enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability to benefit basis and is considered eligible for funds under section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C. §1091); or,
    (d) who has been determined through an independent assessment conducted by the program to be incapable of obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent (provided that the Corporation has waived the education requirement for the individual).

The program will be required to maintain appropriate documentation to verify eligibility of its members.

MEMBER SELECTION

Each AmeriCorps program selects its members and the selection criteria may vary. However, programs must conduct their selection processes in a non-partisan, non-political and non-discriminatory manner. Additionally, programs must establish minimum qualifications reflective of the service that members provide. Programs are encouraged to select members who possess

leadership potential as well as a commitment to the goals of the national service program, regardless of educational level, work experience or economic background.

- *Diversity.* A program builds strong communities when it engages members and staff from different backgrounds in common service. Applicants should actively seek to include members and staff from the communities where the project operates, as well as men and women of various faiths, races, ethnicities, education levels, socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities. A program's objectives might require that members and staff share a specific characteristic or background. Please note, however, that programs cannot violate the non-discrimination, non-duplication, and non-displacement rules that govern member and staff selection.

- *Reasonable Accommodation for Disabilities.* Programs and activities must be accessible to people with disabilities, and programs must provide reasonable accommodation to known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified members, service recipients, applicants and program staff. All selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation. By far, the vast majority of accommodations are inexpensive. For those limited cases where reasonable accommodations are more costly, CSC has funds available to provide accommodations for members.

MEMBER BENEFITS

- *Living Allowances.* There is no minimum living allowance for members serving in Education Awards Programs. However, programs are strongly urged to provide a living allowance for full-time members. For other national and state AmeriCorps programs, the minimum living allowance for full-time members is $10,600.

  The maximum living allowance for full-time members is $21,200 per year. This maximum may be waived for programs that meet the criteria for professional corps. Any living allowance for half-time or other terms of service may not exceed a prorated share of the $21,200 maximum.

- *Child Care and Health Insurance.* Education Awards Programs are not required to provide child care or health insurance for members. They may, of course, offer them if they chose.

- *Education Awards.* AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will receive an education award for up to two terms of service, directly from the Corporation. Education awards are not calculated as part of the program's grant. The following chart shows the relationship between the number of hours an AmeriCorps member serves and the education award the member receives based upon the successful completion of the term of service:

Term of Service	Number of Hours	Education Award
Full-time	at least 1,700	$4,725
Half-time	at least 900	$2,362.50
Reduced half-time	at least 675	$1,800
Quarter-time	at least 450	$1,250
Minimum-time	at least 300	$1,000

Members may use their education awards up to seven years from completion of service. They may use their awards to pay for any combination of: (1) the costs of attendance at a qualified institution of higher education; (2) the costs of approved school-to-work programs; or, (3) the costs of repaying qualified student loans.

While they serve, members who have outstanding qualified student loans may be eligible for forbearance on their payments. To qualify, they must contact their loan holders. Upon successful completion of a member's terms of service, the Corporation will make payments for interest that accrued during the period of forbearance.

MEMBER MANAGEMENT

- *AmeriCorps Pledge.* Programs are required to administer the AmeriCorps pledge or another similar oath when members begin their term of service.

- *Service Gear.* For the purposes of local and national identity, programs should provide an AmeriCorps uniform, which incorporates the AmeriCorps logo. Programs may use grant funds to pay for a standard Service Gear package (AmeriCorps t-shirt, sweatshirt, hat, pin, decals and buttons) for members. The standard Service Gear package is priced at $35. Programs are encouraged to provide this package to members. Many AmeriCorps members serve in settings where a shirt with a collar is more appropriate attire. The Corporation recognizes that for purposes of credibility, it is important that members have appropriate clothes in order to perform their service. Therefore, if members need a shirt with a collar, programs may include an additional amount of up to $35, for a maximum total of $70 of Corporation funds per member in the budget.

- *Grievance Procedures.* Programs must establish a grievance procedure for members who believe that they have been unfairly released and for other grievances filed by members or other interested parties. *The procedures must include an opportunity for a hearing and binding arbitration within statutory deadlines.* Additionally, programs are encouraged to establish an alternative dispute resolution procedure, such as mediation.

PROHIBITED SERVICE ACTIVITIES

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

(1) attempting to influence legislation;

(2) organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;

(3) assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;

(4) impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;

(5) engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;

(6) participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

(7) engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;

(8) providing a direct benefit to:

    (i) a business organized for profit;

    (ii) a labor union;

    (iii) a partisan political organization;

    (iv) a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and

    (v) an organization engaged in the religious activities unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and,

(9) such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

Further, AmeriCorps members engaging in fundraising activities MAY NOT:

- secure resources to meet the AmeriCorps grant match requirements (cash or in-kind);
- prepare grant applications for funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service or any other federal agency; or
- secure resources that instead of supporting the accomplishment of the program's direct service objectives, support other programs or the general operating budgets and resources of participating organizations.

The Corporation acknowledges that religious and political activities play a positive role in healthy communities, that religion and politics are defining characteristics of many community organizations (faith-based and secular), and that religious and political belief and action are central to many AmeriCorps members' lives. However, it is important that AmeriCorps programs and their members do not appear to be taking sides religiously or politically. Consequently, there are a number of limitations on activities that AmeriCorps can support and can engage in when on duty, or when otherwise identified as representing AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps members are free to pursue these activities on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds. The AmeriCorps logo should not be worn while doing so.

As national and community service is a topic of ongoing discussion in the legislative arena, the rules concerning legislative lobbying and political activity are extremely important. The Corporation only subsidizes costs that are reasonable and necessary to achieve the approved program objectives. Communicating with legislators about pending legislation, encouraging others to contact their legislators, organizing letter-writing campaigns to Congress, printing politically-charged articles in a Corporation-funded newsletter, organizing or participating in voter registration drives, and taking part in political events are not allowable grant expenses. An organization that receives Corporation funds may only sponsor or endorse political events if it does so without using Corporation support, and if it avoids the appearance that it is doing so in its capacity as a Corporation grantee or that the event has any connection to a Corporation-funded project.

GRANT TERMS AND REQUIREMENTS

PERFORMANCE MEASURES, EVALUATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, requires applicants for funding to develop measurable performance goals to determine the impact of AmeriCorps on communities and participants. The Corporation is placing increased emphasis on the importance of performance measures as both a program management tool and a means by which to communicate program impact.

- *Performance Measures.* Performance measurement is a systematic way of measuring the amounts of goods produced, services delivered, and benefits experienced by service recipients and communities. Performance measurement can serve as a powerful management tool. It also empowers organizations by helping them demonstrate quantifiable results. As such, strong proposed performance measures give advantage to applicants as they compete for available funds.

  Performance measures represent annual goals for the primary activities of AmeriCorps members. While the narrative section of the application provides an opportunity to describe the compelling, unmet community need and the desired outcome over the course of the AmeriCorps grant, performance measures track progress on a yearly basis. The program design is outlined using a logic model which provides a visual representation of the specific community need, available resources and alignment of activities toward outputs, intermediate and end outcomes. Performance measures are then developed to capture the primary activities to achieve the desired outcomes. It is expected that for each activity a program can measure the amount of service or quantify a number of clients served. Therefore, at a minimum, each performance measure must include an output measure. To the extent possible, activities should strive to reach end outcomes. CSC recognizes that each program year introduces new AmeriCorps members, new service recipients and new data, so performance measures represent one program year. It is anticipated that programs will achieve end outcomes, if not annually, then by the end of the three-year AmeriCorps grant. Performance measures will be revised annually prior to contracting in consultation with the CSC program officer.

  The Corporation's approach to performance measurement (explained in detail in Appendix B) has been designed to help programs define the activities they intend to undertake and the progress they expect to make toward meeting pressing community needs. Performance measures should focus on the primary service being delivered to fill the gap to meet the critical community need. Member hours or "term of service" must be captured within all performance measures across the three program design categories. For instance, 20 percent of member hours should be reflected in the member development performance measures. Likewise target numbers and percentages should represent the intensity and quantity of service hours dedicated to each activity. Each performance measure will then provide an indicator as to whether the program is having the intended effect. Progress toward these indicators will be monitored on an ongoing basis and will be considered in future funding decisions. Applicants will:

- Develop at least four performance measures, each of which must at a minimum, measure the service output;
- Develop at least one performance measure and no more than three in each program design category – *Needs and Service Activities*, *Strengthening Communities, and Member Development*;
- Agree to one common performance measure related to volunteer recruitment and management, which will measure the outputs of the number of community volunteers recruited **and** the number of service hours performed by the community volunteers;
- Agree to one common performance measure related to civic education training, which will measure changes in member knowledge, skills, and attitudes about citizenship;
- Submit performance measures that are achievable at their target levels within a twelve month period;
- Revise performance measures in consultation with CSC staff prior to submission to the Corporation;
- Participate in negotiating performance measures prior to contracting;
- Develop a system for collecting and organizing this performance data on an ongoing basis;
- Include the results in progress and final reports; and,
- Utilize data to continuously improve program operations.

Information on developing performance measures is included in Appendix B on page 46.

The Corporation fully recognizes that these performance measures will reflect individual program goals and circumstances, and expects that there will be a wide spectrum of different performance measures across all grantees. For example, a program that places individual members in separate community-based organizations (sites) to perform indirect service activities for those organizations will have measures that differ substantially from a program that uses AmeriCorps members to recruit volunteers to tutor in a single school. The Corporation recognizes that performance measures alone do not reflect the full scope and impact of AmeriCorps programs. Therefore, these measures are not the only items that will be considered when evaluating an application.

During implementation of a grant, performance measures may need to be adjusted based on program experience. Programs selected for funding will negotiate their final performance measures with CSC and/or the Corporation. Further, a program's record of meeting such performance measures will be considered in determining future funding.

As part of a broader effort to aggregate impact data nationally and in California, it is anticipated that the Corporation and CSC will develop two performance measures in consultation with grantees that will apply to all AmeriCorps programs in 2005. Please see the performance measure instructions for more information.

- *Evaluation.* While performance measurement and evaluation both include systematic data collection and measurement of progress, evaluations use scientifically-based research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of programs. By comparing the

observed program outcomes with what would have happened in the absence of the program, evaluations can help programs estimate their impacts.

The National and Community Service Trust Act specifies that an applicant arrange for an evaluation of an AmeriCorps national service program receiving assistance from the Corporation. *As such, all AmeriCorps programs must arrange for an evaluation of the AmeriCorps program at least once every four years.* Programs are encouraged to conduct evaluation activities on a more frequent basis. Upon approval of a grant application, programs are encouraged to begin arranging for outside evaluations. Expenses related to evaluations are allowable grant expenses. In addition, grantees may wish to develop partnerships with institutions of higher education to conduct evaluation activities.

Both CSC and the Corporation will consider such evaluation studies when making judgments about an organization's application for funds. Summary information concerning all evaluations of program outcomes completed in the last four years should be included with the application. When considering evaluation studies in assessing an applicant's proposal, the Corporation recognizes that the existence, scope, and nature of evaluations will vary based on the organization, its resources, program activities, and model. Evaluation materials submitted should be directly related to the proposed activities of the AmeriCorps program, and not of another program operated by the legal applicant or partnership. See the *Application Forms and Instructions* for information on how to submit evaluation materials.

- *Reporting Requirements.* Programs are required to electronically submit quarterly reports that detail their accomplishments to date.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- *Federal Financial Management and Grant Administration Requirements.* As with all federal grant programs, it is the responsibility of all grantees to ensure appropriate stewardship of federal funds entrusted to them. Under the Corporation's regulations, each grantee must maintain financial management systems that provide accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of its program. To meet this requirement, programs must have adequate accounting practices and procedures, internal controls, audit trails, and cost allocation procedures. OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations, requires all organizations to have financial audits if they annually expend $500,000 or more under federal awards. This requirement applies to the organization's total expenditures each fiscal year under all of its federal awards, not just an AmeriCorps grant.

  As with all federal grant programs, programs must ensure that their activities, including those of any subgrantees, will be conducted, and facilities operated, in compliance with the applicable civil rights statutes and their implementing regulations. Programs must obtain assurances of such compliance prior to extending federal financial assistance to subgrantees. For civil rights purposes, all programs and projects funded or receiving service members

under the National and Community Service Act, as amended, are programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. <u>See the grant provisions for specific requirements</u>.

- *Grant Awards.* Successful applicants will enter into a multi-year award agreement; however, funding will be provided at the outset only for the first year of the program. Neither the Corporation nor CSC has any obligation to provide additional funding in subsequent years. Funding for the second and third years of an approved program is contingent upon the availability of funds, adequate performance including satisfactory progress toward the approved performance measures, submission of proposed changes in activities or objectives, a detailed budget and budget narrative for the applicable program year, and any other criteria established in the award agreement.

  In addition, Congress is considering changes to the Corporation's authorizing statutes. If changes are enacted, they will have an effect on grants supported by the Corporation, and will likely require changes in the grant, including potentially, the grant period. The Corporation will work with grantees to assure the effective implementation of any changes and improvements made by Congress to its programs.

- *Contracts.* CSC anticipates that contracts for the first year of the grant award will run from July 1, 2005 – December 31, 2006.

- *Sustainability.* Potential for sustainability has always been used as a criterion to judge the merits of an AmeriCorps program application. Both CSC and the Corporation are placing a greater emphasis on sustainability for all applicants. The Corporation defines a sustainable program as one that meets community needs with diminishing Corporation funds. Policy changes that allow for capacity building activities and emphasize volunteer generation are intended in part to assist programs in becoming more sustainable.

  By establishing a sustainability plan before a grant is even awarded, organizations increase their potential to acquire long-term financial viability and improve program quality. Achieving sustainability enables programs to continue and expand service and volunteer activities with reduced AmeriCorps funding. Applicants are **required** to provide specific information describing plans to build capacity and move towards sustainability. Plans should address issues including:

  - *Diversity of Revenue Sources* - Multiple funding sources including earned income through fees and other allowable program income, a mixture of public funding from local and state government, and private funding from foundations and businesses.
  - *Strength of Program Partnership* - Numerous partnering organizations that make a substantial commitment of resources to the program.
  - *Program Quality and Efficiencies* - Organizations that demonstrate an increased level of productivity with flat or declining levels of federal support demonstrate effective models of sustainability. While these programs may not be totally independent of federal sources of revenue, the reduction of overhead costs and increased efficiencies in the means by which services are delivered can help make the program's efforts sustainable in a community in the long term.

- *Volunteer Recruitment and Management* - Organizations that recruit large numbers of volunteers as part of their AmeriCorps program can use the volunteers to conduct a wider range of community service activities. The Corporation is especially interested in partnerships through which corporations can commit their employees as volunteers on an ongoing basis for an extended period of time.

AmeriCorps members may assist programs in their efforts to sustainability in roles including:

- Recruitment and management of volunteers;
- Strengthening partnerships with community organizations and other partners;
- Marketing and promotion activities; and,
- Fundraising efforts (please see page 30 for allowable member fundraising activities).

Achieving sustainability is a complex undertaking; CSC and the Corporation are committed to working with organizations to accomplish this goal. Because organizations, and the challenges they face, differ, neither CSC nor the Corporation have a philosophy that limits our funding to a maximum period (e.g., three years).

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Grantees are required to secure and/or maintain reliable access to electronic mail and the Internet as part of their grant. The majority of reporting requirements and communications to grantees are completed through the Internet and electronic mail. Applicants without sufficient access to computers and related hardware may budget for such items in their funding request. Please see the *Application Forms and Instructions* for more information regarding budgeting information.

- *Web-Based Reporting System (WBRS).* Programs that receive AmeriCorps grants must make use of the Corporation's Web-Based Reporting System (WBRS) to enroll AmeriCorps members and track their service hours, and track accomplishment data in order to submit progress reports. Use of WBRS requires a computer with access to the Internet.

- *eGrants.* The Corporation is working with other federal agencies to simplify federal grantmaking processes and provide access to federal activities over the Internet. The Corporation has developed a new grants management system that includes on-line grant applications, awards, and reporting. AmeriCorps programs will continue to use the existing Web-Based Reporting System (WBRS) for member-related procedures and for financial and program reporting. However, other activities, including applying for grants, audit resolution, and the award process are now done through the new system, which is named *eGrants*.

  Those applicants that CSC elects to forward to the Corporation will receive information on entering their application into eGrants prior to submission to the Corporation.

- *Recruitment Tools and Resources.* In order to supplement grantees' recruiting efforts, and to make sure that the information in the nationwide system is comprehensive and of maximum benefit to individuals who want to become AmeriCorps members, use of the recruitment system, found on the AmeriCorps website - www.americorps.org - is now mandatory for AmeriCorps programs.

This system allows AmeriCorps programs to post information about their programs and their member assignments. All AmeriCorps programs will be responsible for having a comprehensive program profile on-line and will consider on-line applicants for their AmeriCorps positions. Programs may list multiple assignments as well as multiple geographic sites. Using their own criteria, programs may search for prospective members for their recruitment outreach efforts. Programs can e-mail prospective members and applicants to alert them to program information and updates, interview schedules, and other service opportunities. For more information, visit the AmeriCorps website. As part of the web-based recruitment system, prospective members may apply directly to participating AmeriCorps programs electronically, as well as search for programs based on their interests, eligibility, and geographic preference. The AmeriCorps hotline is available at 1-800-942-2677 for those without Internet access.

PROGRAM DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

- *Monitoring and Management Responsibilities.* Programs are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the grant and sub-grant-supported activities to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements and achievement of programmatic goals. Monitoring needs to cover each program, function, or activity. Programs are responsible for ensuring program quality and that the program has an impact on the problems facing the communities in which it operates. This includes monitoring the service of members. Programs are responsible for the timely and accurate documentation of member eligibility and service hours. Each program should develop systems that closely track and monitor these requirements.

- *Supplementation.* AmeriCorps funds should be used to supplement existing funds. AmeriCorps funding cannot be used to supplant, i.e., replace existing funds.

- *Non-duplication.* Grant funds may not be used to duplicate services that are available in the locality of the program or project. The grantee may not conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a state or local government agency in which the grantee entity resides.

- *Non-displacement.* The grantee may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages or employment benefits, as a result of a member serving in a program or project.

- *Federal College Work-Study and Student Service.*
  [Required for Higher Education Institutions Applying for AmeriCorps funding]
  The Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1998 requires that all institutions of higher education who receive federal college work-study (FWS) funds utilize a minimum of seven percent of their total FWS budget for community service placements. Each college must also include a literacy component that is defined in regulations by the Department of Education.

Community service activities undertaken using FWS can be a valuable resource for national service programs. While the FWS program is administered by college financial aid offices, many colleges have built strong relationships between the community service, service-learning, or volunteer office and the financial aid office to enhance community service efforts of the campus. Some service offices even manage the community service FWS program on their campus. Both service offices and community partners can assist the financial aid office in enhancing community service FWS programs.

The Corporation has summarized data reported by the Department of Education on FWS for Community Service usage. Applicants can compare their institution's usage to that of others at www.nationalservice.org/areads/FWS/index.html.

Programs sponsored by higher education institutions must describe their institution's efforts to support community service under FWS. Specifically include the percentage of your school's 2003-04 FWS funds that were used for community service placements and your plans for further efforts in this area. This information will be used when considering your application.

REVIEW PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

SELECTION TIMELINE

2005

January 14	Letters of intent due
February 4	Applications due – applications must be **at the CSC office** by 5:00 p.m.
February 10-16	Applicant interviews via conference call
February 25	Preliminary funding decisions announced
June 1 (tentative)	Corporation funding decisions announced
August (tentative)	CSC 3-day training event

SELECTION PROCESS

Both CSC and the Corporation typically receive far more in funding requests than can be awarded. CSC staff will interview all Education Awards Program applicants through a series of conference calls. Information on scheduling a ninety minute interview can be found in the *2005 AmeriCorps Education Awards Program Forms and Instructions*.

Interview conference calls give CSC staff opportunities to discuss program implementation with applicants. During the course of a phone interview, a team of CSC staff members will speak with three to seven representatives of an applicant's partnership. The CSC team will have prepared a series of questions based on an applicant's written proposal. All questions will directly pertain to the criteria outlined on pages 42-43 of this RFP and in the *2005 AmeriCorps Education Awards Program Forms and Instructions*. Once interviews are complete, CSC staff will forward to the Corporation those applications that it deems to be of high quality.

The Corporation's review process may consist of peer review panels and review by Corporation staff with approval by the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer.

CSC provides all applicants with the opportunity to request a summary of reviewer comments in order to support continuous improvement efforts of all applicants. Notification letters will include instructions for requesting reviewer comments.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO APPLICANTS

CSC will provide technical assistance to applicants through posting of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the CSC website.

CSC posts FAQs to assure that all applicants have access to the same technical assistance. Applicants may submit a FAQ at www.csc.ca.gov/grants/fundingfaq.asp. Answers to questions received by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday of each week will be posted on the website by Monday of the following week. **CSC will not respond directly to applicants via e-mail or by phone.**

In addition, the *Get Grants* section of the CSC website will be updated on a weekly basis with additional resources to assist applicants in completing their proposals. CSC recommends that applicants check the website on a weekly basis for updates.

SELECTION CRITERIA
The following selection criteria will be utilized during the review process:

Program Design (60 percent)
Needs and Service Activities
- Well-documented compelling community need
- Effective involvement of target community in planning and implementation
- Well-designed activities with appropriate performance measures
- Well-defined roles for participants that lead to measurable outcomes or impact
- Previous history of accomplishments in the proposed activity areas
- Value added through AmeriCorps and the education award

Member Development
- Effective plans for recruiting, developing, training, supervising, and recognizing members
- Well-designed activities that promote an ethic of service and civic responsibility
- Well-designed plan to engage members in high-quality service-learning as defined by the Corporation[4]

Strengthening Communities
- Developing community resources, including recruiting and managing volunteers, with appropriate performance measures
- Strong community partnerships, including well-defined roles for community organizations
- Potential for sustainability, as evidenced in the sustainability plan
- Enhanced capacity building of organizations and institutions
- Uniting people of different backgrounds in service

Organizational Capacity (25 Percent)
- Ability to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight
- Well-defined roles for staff and administrators
- Sound track record of accomplishment as a partnership, particularly in the proposed activity areas
- Well-designed plan or systems for self-assessment, evaluation, and continuous improvement

Budget/Cost Effectiveness (15 Percent)
- Commitment of non-federal resources to the proposed program
- Adequate budget to support program design
- Cost-effective within program guidelines

The bullets under each heading describe the elements that should be included in your program narrative. Program Design includes three subcategories and represents 60 percent of the basis used to evaluate and select each program. The subcategories of *Needs and Service Activities*, *Strengthening Communities, and Member Development* are related and are therefore grouped in a

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[4] All applicants are encouraged to include service-learning activities in their program design. However, this is only a selection criterion for Learn and Serve America.

single Program Design criterion. Equal importance will be given to these subcategories when judging applications.

ADDITIONAL FEDERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Corporation continues to make children and youth a priority that cuts across all AmeriCorps programs and activities. In addition, the Corporation will consider the following items in making final selections via the national competition:

- programs that are high-quality, innovative, have the potential to be replicated by programs in other areas, and that can sustain themselves or the service activities with other support when the grant period ends;
- programs that collaborate with or propose to foster federal college work-study students in community service;
- a wide range of program designs and approaches to community service that meet community needs;
- programs that are geographically diverse across the state, region, or country and include urban and rural areas;
- programs that sponsor AmeriCorps activities in areas of high concentrations of low-income people;
- programs in areas affected by military downsizing; and,
- programs that demonstrate they can effectively develop and administer an AmeriCorps program with proper supervision, monitoring, evaluation, and financial controls.

Overall, the Corporation seeks a grant portfolio of programs that utilizes a wide range of program designs and approaches to community service that meet various community needs. The Corporation is interested in supporting programs that are located in low-income, urban, or rural areas as well as organizations that operate professional corps programs. In addition, the Corporation looks to continue to build a portfolio of programs that is geographically diverse and includes: young and older adults, a balance of individuals who have not attended college and those with college coursework, approximately equal numbers of men and women, individuals with disabilities, and individuals of all races, ethnicities, faiths, and economic backgrounds.

APPENDIX A – FAITH-BASED AND SMALL COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

OVERVIEW

Through its range of grant programs, CSC has observed that many small organizations – both secular and faith-based – provide a range of valuable services in their local communities. Unfortunately, government grant accounting, reporting and evaluation requirements demand an infrastructure and level of administrative capacity that often precludes smaller organizations from administering public funding. It is CSC's intention to make AmeriCorps resources more accessible to faith-based organizations (FBOs) and small community-based organizations (CBOs) that may have little or no experience with government grants. FBOs and small CBOs with the capacity to administer public funds are certainly classified as eligible legal applicants. However, FBOs and CBOs can also benefit from AmeriCorps program roles such as member service site, source of volunteers, beneficiary of volunteer projects, etc.

CSC understands that there is no universal definition for FBOs and CBOs, small or otherwise. The following definitions represent CSC's best efforts at establishing guidelines that balance its intent and its role as a steward of public funds.

SMALL COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

For purposes of this RFP, an organization is considered to be a small community-based organization if it is a nonprofit organization that has six or fewer full-time equivalent employees and an annual budget of less than $450,000.

FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

For purposes of this RFP, an organization is considered to be a faith-based organization (FBO) if it meets at least one of the following definitions:

1. The entity is an organization, program or project sponsored/hosted by a religious congregation (must be incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization);
2. The entity is a nonprofit organization founded by a religious congregation or religiously-motivated incorporators and board members that clearly states in its name, incorporation, or mission statement that it is a religiously-motivated institution; OR
3. The entity is a collaboration of organizations that clearly and explicitly includes organizations from the previously described categories.

A general guideline for faith-based organizations receiving AmeriCorps funds is that AmeriCorps members cannot proselytize or engage in any religious activity while they are officially engaged in their service activities. Thus, AmeriCorps tutors serving at a faith-based organization could work with students in schools, but could not attempt to encourage them to attend religious services.

Applicants are also advised that AmeriCorps funds are not covered under Charitable Choice provisions.

RESOURCES

Community-based organizations throughout California have access to a network of nonprofit support centers and community foundations.

- Statewide, 14 nonprofit support centers provide workshops in nonprofit management and fundraising, assistance with information and referrals to other community resources. Locations and additional information can be found at http://search.genie.org/genie/cmap.lasso.

- There are more than 20 California community foundations that provide support to local organizations. All community foundations provide grants, while some also provide referrals to other sources of funding. More information on community foundations can be found at www.lccf.org

The University of Southern California's Center for Religion and Civic Culture has produced products that may be of interest to FBOs. The Center's publications include *Increasing Your Congregation's Capacity to Offer Publicly-Funded Human Service Programs*, as well as a number of guides with useful advice on grantwriting and preparing proposals. The Center's website (www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/religion_online/index.html) also contains links to other organizations of interest to faith-based organizations.

CNCS has produced a resource for AmeriCorps applicants seeking to involve FBOs and CBOs in their programs. The resource is available at www.nationalserviceresources.org/initiatives/faces/toolkit_for_americorps_applicants_faces/index.php

APPENDIX B – PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

OVERVIEW
Performance measurement is the art and science of assessing how well an organization is achieving its goals. By examining the ways in which programs are "getting things done," performance measurement empowers key non-profit stakeholders, strengthens AmeriCorps, and helps to maximize programs' benefits to communities and participants alike. To this end, both the Corporation and CSC are placing increased emphasis on the use of performance measures and logic models, both as program management tools and as means to communicate program impacts.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES
Creating performance measures is an important part of program design. Applicants should:

- think through each of the different activities AmeriCorps members will engage in;
- identify the likely impact or change that will result from those activities; and,
- determine how to best measure those results.

While performance measures provide good indicators of progress toward program goals, defining these measures is just one aspect of program design. Performance measurement is most useful as part of a larger process of program planning; in particular, you will likely find it helpful to plan members' anticipated activities and impacts in the form of a logic model.

A logic model is a concise visual plan illustrating the logical flow by which key program activities will lead to specific community impacts. The main purposes of logic models are to help you:

- Specify the issues and goals that your program seeks to address;
- Think through each of the activities your AmeriCorps members will undertake;
- Identify and clarify the likely results of those activities;
- Identify the key program elements that must be tracked to assess your program's progress toward its goals;
- Clarify program premises and key assumptions;
- Communicate your proposed program's potential value; and,
- Improve program planning and performance by identifying the ways to measure program success and areas for improvement.

Logic models are made up of five key components. Each component connects to the next component via an "if *A* then *B*" sequence of reasoning. The five components are:
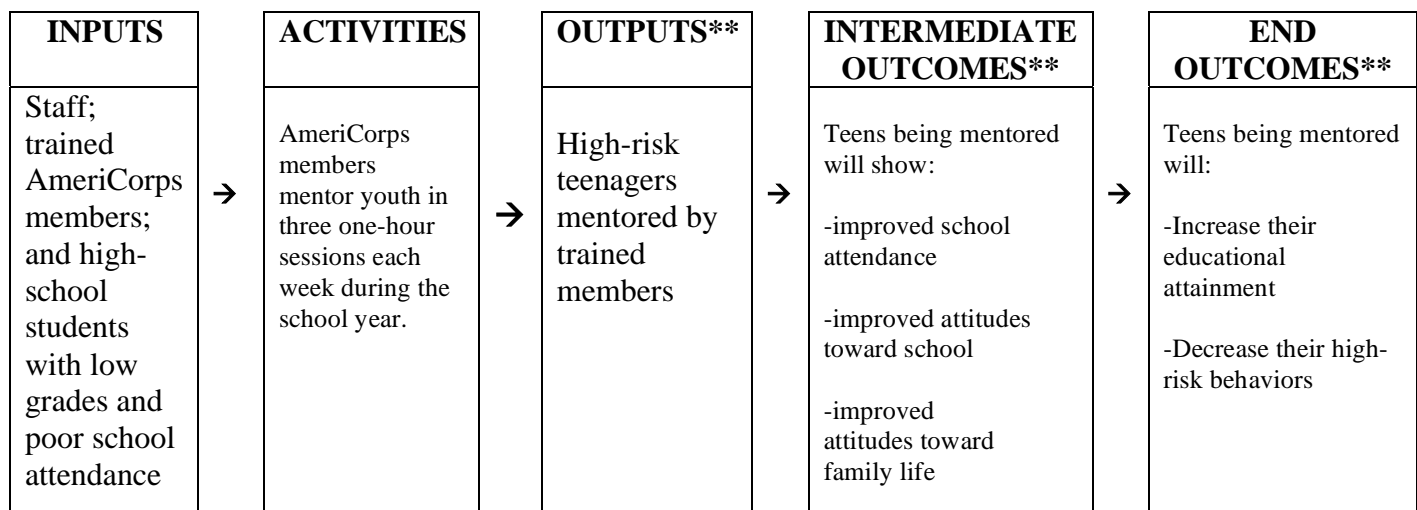
- *Inputs* – Resources, both within your program and outside of your program, that are necessary to complete program activities.

- *Activities* – Member efforts designed to mobilize the inputs toward specific community goals.

- *Outputs* – Measures of the *amount* of service that members or volunteers have completed. Outputs *do not* provide information on benefits or other changes in the lives of members and/or beneficiaries.

- *Intermediate Outcomes* – Changes that have occurred in the lives of the beneficiaries and/or members, but have fallen short of a significant benefit for them. Intermediate outcomes should serve as building blocks that contribute directly to your larger goals.

- *End Outcomes* – Changes that have occurred in the lives of beneficiaries and/or members that constitute significant and lasting benefits to them. End outcomes represent the "big picture" goals that drive your efforts.

The table below is an example of how you might structure your activities and measurement efforts toward a specific goal. These types of tables are not intended as "add-ons" to your planning efforts; we hope that they will offer you a concise way to communicate your ideas on paper.

Goal: members help high-school students increase their educational attainment and decrease their high-risk behaviors

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS**	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES**	END OUTCOMES**
Staff; trained AmeriCorps members; and high-school students with low grades and poor school attendance	AmeriCorps members mentor youth in three one-hour sessions each week during the school year.	High-risk teenagers mentored by trained members	Teens being mentored will show: -improved school attendance -improved attitudes toward school -improved attitudes toward family life	Teens being mentored will: -Increase their educational attainment -Decrease their high-risk behaviors

**these columns represent the results of member activities. They should be considered for performance measurement.

In this type of table, there is a direct logical flow from left to right, with each step building on the previous one. However, it is important to note that assigning these types of categories is not a science. While you should use these strategies to help organize your thinking, there is not a single "right" or "wrong" way to design logic models and performance measures. Different circumstances and priorities lead to different logic models and performance measurement decisions, even for programs engaged in the same service activity.

CHOOSING AND REPORTING PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Once you determine your program activities and define how to track your progress, you will choose which measures you want to report to the Corporation and CSC. The last three steps of the logic model (outputs, intermediate outcomes, and end outcomes) represent the results of your members' efforts; this is where performance measurement will help you track your progress.

Successful applicants will choose performance measures that are linked through a logic model, as illustrated above. This will make your performance measures more useful by tying them directly to your program design priorities.

After you have chosen the aspects of your program that you wish to report on, the Performance Measurement Worksheets (included in the *Application Forms and Instructions*) will help you flesh out each measure.

Successful applicants consider these components early in the application process, as experience indicates that well-constructed performance measures are essential to a quality application. To develop performance measures, the Performance Measurement Worksheets require you to describe:

1. The result you expect to achieve;
2. How you will achieve this result;
3. The data and instruments you will use to measure this result; and,
4. The targets you intend to meet for each measure.

You will then combine your responses from Steps 1 and 4 to create each official performance measure. The chart on the next page shows how a program might use each these steps to develop performance measures for a specific logic model. The steps will be discussed in greater detail below.

Goal: members help high-school students increase their educational attainment and decrease their high-risk behaviors

	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	END OUTCOMES
Logic Model	Staff time & expertise; trained members; the time and energy of high-school students with low grades and poor school attendance	Trained AmeriCorps members mentor youth in three one-hour sessions each week during the school year.	High-risk teenagers mentored by trained members	Teens being mentored will show: -improved school attendance -improved attitudes toward school -improved attitudes toward family life	Teens being mentored will: -Increase their educational attainment -Decrease their high-risk behaviors
			↓	↓	↓
Performance Measurement Worksheet Questions	**1. Identify the result you expect to achieve**		High risk teenagers mentored	Decreased absences; improved attitudes toward school; improved attitudes toward family life	Increased grade promotion; decreased high-risk behaviors
	2. Describe how you will achieve this result		Members will build on teens' existing interests to keep teens coming back for mentoring sessions	Members will stress the value of school, helping teens understand how school will help them meet their goals. This will contribute to increased attendance. Once members gain teens' trust, members and teens will discuss school- and family-related issues. This will help teens develop positive alternatives for dealing with frustrating situations, increasing teens' sense of agency and improving their attitudes.	By more consistently attending school and adopting an attitude of more positive engagement, teens will likely increase their achievement and avoid the behavioral problems that can keep them from being promoted to the next grade level. By helping teens improve their attitudes in critical aspects of their lives, members will decrease teens' likelihood to "act out" through high-risk behaviors.
	3. What <u>data</u> and <u>instruments</u> will you use?		<u>Data</u>- Tutor Hours <u>Instrument</u>- Attendance logs	<u>Data</u>- percentage of teens showing these changes <u>Instruments</u>- School absence records; Youth Survey (pre- and post-tests)	<u>Data</u>- percent of teens promoted to the next grade level; percent reporting high-risk behaviors <u>Instruments</u>- School advancement records; Youth Index of High-Risk Behaviors (pre- and post- tests)
	4. What targets do you expect to meet?		-30 AmeriCorps members spent 120 hours each with 30 high-risk teens	-60% of teens will decrease absences by at least 25%; -67% of teens will report improved attitudes on at least half of the school-related Survey questions; and -50% will report improved attitudes on at least half of the family-related questions	-70% of teens will be promoted to the next grade level -95% of teens will show a decrease of at least 10% in each of the three Risk Index categories
	5. Combine steps 1 & 4 to create your performance measure		-30 high-risk teens will receive 120 hours of one-on-one mentoring from AmeriCorps members	-60% of teens will decrease absences by at least 25%; -67% of teens will improve their attitudes toward school, as evidenced by improvement from pre-test to post-test on at least half of the related questions; and -50% of teens will improve their attitudes toward family life, as evidenced by improvement from pre-test to post-test on at least half of the related questions	-70% of teens will increase their grade promotion by one grade level -95% of teens will decrease their high-risk behaviors, as evidenced by 10% decreases from pre-test to post-test in each of the three Risk Index categories

As you think about each step in the development of your performance measures, be sure to consider the following:

1. **Identify the result you want to achieve** – Your logic model has already laid out the general effect you plan to achieve (for example, the end outcome of "increased educational attainment"). Applicants should use this section to convert each general goal from the logic models into a *tangible, observable result* (such as "increased grade promotion"). These types of results are called *indicators.*

   Your response here might look quite similar to your logic model. This is not necessarily a problem; indicators and logic models will be closely tied, but this connection will vary depending on how directly the logic model goal can be measured. For example, outputs are generally easy to measure directly. End outcomes, on the other hand, usually require more indirect measures, so these end outcome indicators will often look somewhat different from the broader effects described in the logic model.

2. **Describe how you will achieve this result** – This response is closely related to your member activities, but it should provide more detail than the "Activities" section of the logic model. This section should discuss *the specific ways that your activities will lead to the desired result* from step 1.

3. **What data and instruments will you use?** – This step describes how you will measure the result you identified in step 1. In describing your "data," you should clarify the exact information you will use to report on this result. Your "instrument" should describe the tool you will use to collect these data.

4. **What targets do you expect to meet?** – A target is a specific and quantifiable level of change that you want to attain. This is your opportunity to define what success means to you, with regard to your result from step 1. Be realistic about what your program can accomplish, given the resources at your disposal and the factors within your control.

   To maximize the value of this section, you should include targets for *breadth* (for example, the percentage of students who will show improvement) and *depth* (how much improvement these students will show) whenever possible.

5. **Combine steps 1 and 4 to create your performance measure** – Refer to step 5 of the table to see how you can combine your indicator (Step 1) and your target (Step 4) to create a working performance measure. Since some indicators are not directly tied to the broader effects described in the logic model, be sure to verify that each performance measure represents significant progress toward your logic model goals.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

As you enter into the actual management of your program, logic models and performance measures should help you understand your progress as a series of simple, manageable steps. Using the example from the table on the previous page: suppose members were successfully spending time with high-risk teenagers (the output), leading to improved attendance (one of the intermediate outcomes). But what if one year into the program, these teens were still having legal troubles and being asked to repeat grades (the end outcome)? Although the program might be achieving success on one of its intermediate measures, they would be falling short of the "big picture" success they envisioned.

Performance measures can help programs make necessary mid-course adjustments and meet their goals. Since this program chose to collect a wide range of performance measures, their youth survey might reveal specific areas in which teens' attitudes needed further improvement (the other intermediate outcome). By using this information to inform their ongoing strategic development, the program could find new strategies to reach out to teens and ultimately achieve their desired end outcomes.

RESOURCES

The Corporation will continue to provide training and technical assistance to help grantees and subgrantees enhance their capacity to develop, implement, and report on performance measurements. Through Project STAR, available resources include performance measurement toolkits, training events at state and national conferences, and online training materials.

Please see Project STAR's website at www.projectstar.org/ and their "Performance Measurement Toolkit" at www.projectstar.org/star/AmeriCorps/pmtoolkit.htm

Project STAR also provides clarification to applicants regarding the Performance Measurement section of the application. You can reach them via e-mail at star@aiweb.com or through their telephone assistance hotline at 1-800-548-3656.

Below is a list of further online resources and publications the Corporation recommends for developing performance measurements:

- The Urban Institute: "Key Steps in Outcome Management" – http://www.urban.org/Template.cfm?Section=ByTopic&NavMenuID=62&template=/TaggedContent/ViewPublication.cfm&PublicationID=8381

- United Way of America Outcome Measurement Resources – http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/

- "Urban Institute Report" on performance measurement at the Corporation for National and Community Service – http://nationalservice.org/pdf/outcome.pdf

- The Results & Performance Accountability Implementation Guide – www.raguide.org/Default.htm

Programs are encouraged, when needed, to seek the help of local or regional professionals to perform and oversee performance measurement activities, including the development of a plan that encompasses the collection of and reporting on outcome data that will be used to improve program quality.

APPENDIX C – VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Effective involvement of volunteers will vary among AmeriCorps program, depending upon the nature of the service activities, organizational capacity, and the program's plans for sustainability.

Factors to Consider for Volunteer Recruitment and Management

In determining how volunteer recruitment will support the overall mission of the program, applicants should assess their ability to run a volunteer program by considering:

- the level of volunteering that is needed for the program, including the number of volunteers, the number of hours of service for volunteers, whether volunteers will serve on a one-time or recurring basis, and the frequency of volunteer service required;
- what volunteer skills and experiences are needed to make the program successful (developing volunteer job descriptions and clearly stated goals and objectives for the volunteers can assist in making these determinations);
- whether the recruitment strategy is feasible and strives to achieve broad representation from the community, including making materials accessible to audiences from different languages and backgrounds; and,
- how applicants will provide the support necessary for volunteers to develop different and/or higher levels of volunteer responsibility and grow in their personal capacity.